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STRATEGIC PLAN PROCESS



State of Nevada Board of Examiners for Social Workers 2021-2023 Strategic Planning Process

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this brief is to lay out the rationale and the process for conducting strategic planning to guide the future direction of the Nevada Board of Examiners for Social Workers (BESW). To ensure the Board understands its roles and responsibilities and is positioned to make strategic decisions, the Board has contracted with Social Entrepreneurs, Inc. to support updating the Board's current strategic plan and facilitate the development of the 2024-2027 strategic plan. This strategic planning process follows a series of changes that have taken place since the last strategic plan was adopted in August 2018. Once the new strategic plan is developed, the Board will use it as a living document to guide day-to-day activities, as well as evaluate and adapt to changing conditions.

Project Deliverables

The primary deliverables for the BESW Strategic Planning process include:

- **Revised 2018-2023 Strategic Plan**
- **Final 2024-2027 Strategic Plan**

What is Strategic Planning?

A strategic plan is intended to operate as a communication and management tool that guides the prioritization, goal-setting, and future work of an organization. The framework for a strategic plan allows an organization to evaluate and adapt to changing conditions and remain flexible to changes in political, legal, and organizational environments. The strategic plan should appropriately identify the resources available to an organization and clearly outline how these resources are allocated for the duration of the strategic plan and beyond.

Goal Setting

As part of the strategic planning process, priority focus areas should be identified, and goals should be drafted to support the organization in addressing these focus areas. Goals are established with specific criteria outlined. The acronym SMARTIE is used to establish the criteria that goals should meet when creating actionable steps in the strategic plan.

SMARTIE Objectives

Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Realistic
Time-bound
Inclusive
Equitable

Project Approach

To support the strategic planning process outlined, a series of activities will be conducted to identify priorities, goals, and strategies to inform both the updated current strategic plan, as well as the new strategic plan that will be adopted in 2023.

Document Review

Numerous documents have been provided to SEI by the Board Executive Director and other stakeholder agencies to inform current political, legal, and organizational developments that the Board should consider in their strategic planning process. These documents include:

- ✓ **BESW Board Meeting Minutes**
- ✓ **ASWB Interstate Compacts**
- ✓ **LCB Occupational License Reports**
- ✓ **Small Board Administrative Collaborative Reports**

Data Collection

In addition to document review and research, there will be primary data collection used to gather qualitative data from Board members and other identified stakeholders.

Board Survey

A Board Survey will be used to gather preliminary information on strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats facing the Board to inform potential priorities and focus areas to guide updates to the current strategic plan and identify longer term considerations for the strategic plan that will be adopted in 2023. Additional questions will be asked regarding Board members understanding of their role, purpose, and responsibilities.

Key Informant Interviews

A series of Key Informant Interviews will be conducted with all Board members and other identified stakeholders that work closely with the Board. The purpose of these interviews is to gain further insight into priority areas, as well as long term goals for the new strategic plan. The following Key Informants have been identified as Key Informants and will be engaged in the interview process:

- ✓ **Five (5) Board Members**
- ✓ **ASWB Contact**
- ✓ **UNLV School of Social Work Director**
- ✓ **UNR School of Social Work Director**

Board Member Participation

Board members will be asked to review documents and materials provided ahead of strategic planning and facilitated board meetings. They are required to set the strategic direction of the organization and the priorities and goals for the following years. Through the strategic planning process, they will provide the Executive Director guidance regarding what the Board's priorities are so the Executive Director can execute the priorities and ensure sustainability over the course of the strategic plan.

Timeline

January 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• January Board Meeting: Orientation to the strategic planning process• Board Survey and Key Informant Interviews
March 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• March Board Meeting: Presentation of the Board survey and Key Informant Interview findings, identify additions and changes to Board priorities, and prepare to revise and adopt goals for 2022-2023
May 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• May Board Meeting: Revise and finalize goals and strategies for 2022-2023
July 2022 – January 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• July, September, November, and January Board Meetings: Ongoing activities to identify priorities and goals for the upcoming strategic plan
March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two Day Board Retreat: Develop goals and strategies for the 2024-2027 strategic plan
May 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Present strategic plan to Board for final feedback and revisions

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**OUT-OF-STATE VIDEO
RELINQUISHMENTS**

The following item has been placed on the January 19th, 2022, Board agenda for "Discussion Only". Clark County has requested to be added to the agenda to discuss an item re: Out-of-State Video Relinquishments. The request was made by Jennie Kuhlman, Chief Deputy District Attorney, Juvenile Division, Clark County. She offered to answer questions or have the county's Adoptions Manager explain their issues/ concerns. They stated that all child welfare agencies across the state are struggling with the following issue, and it has become more evident in the COVID age. Simultaneously, BESW Deputy Director Sandra Lowery was contacted by Washoe County about this matter.

Specific Issues and Concerns - Out-of-State Video Relinquishments

We have learned that Clark County has numerous cases where a child is in the custody of a child welfare agency and the case gets to the point where termination of parental rights and adoption has been determined to be in the best interest of the child. For a variety of reasons, a parent may now be residing outside of Nevada. The parent may or may not be incarcerated. The parent will express their desire to relinquish parental rights.

The child welfare agency is then tasked with trying to locate a licensed social worker, witness, and notary in another state to facilitate the relinquishment process (on behalf of Clark County). Many states do not require licensed social workers to facilitate relinquishment under their laws and some even have attorneys facilitate relinquishments.

This process can become quite time consuming and take 6-9 months to locate a licensed social worker that is willing to assist from another state. There have been several cases when the agency has been unable to locate someone to assist. Since the inception of COVID, it has become even more difficult to find social workers to assist.

There are also struggles with accessing parents when they are incarcerated as many prison facilities do not allow in-person visitations due to pandemic restrictions. Prison personnel may be unwilling to assist as they do not want to become witnesses or take on liability.

According to Kuhlman, several child welfare agencies have come up with the idea of doing the relinquishments via a secured video link whereby a Nevada licensed social worker and a disinterested third-party witness here in NV would facilitate the relinquishment.

- This could occur as part of a court hearing or not; Most would not likely be part of a hearing.
- The parent and their Nevada attorney, if they have one, would be on the video and have been provided the necessary paperwork ahead of time.
- If the parent is in custody a notary is not required under Nevada statute.
- If the parent is not in custody, the agency would have planned for a notary to be present with the parent in their home state on video.

The concern/ question being raised is whether the Board of Examiners for Social Workers would consider this to be practicing social work outside of Nevada subjecting them to disciplinary action? To recap, there is a request from Clark County for a written communication from the Board asking if this practice is or is not permissible. In the Clark County cases, these same parents are appointed Nevada attorneys by the court. The attorney contacts their client by video and phone and proffers legal advice. This has not been considered practicing law across stateliness.

In preparing this previous one pager, the following questions/ statements have been made by BESW staff:

1. What is the current agency policy regarding relinquishments?
2. Is the process different or the same in each county?
3. What is the role of the social worker, i.e., are they providing an explanation of the documents, answering questions, providing information about the child, etc.? *This is important to know as those things would be considered "practicing".*
4. Are ICPC's in place (Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children) in these cases? *If so, a child welfare professional is already involved.*
5. What is the agency policy about the role of the social worker in the other state(s)?
6. Is simply "witnessing" considered practice (*i.e., not answering questions*)?
7. BESW has not been contacted by the other 15 counties as yet.